

Lee Burt House

420 Concord.

Local	v	10/25/85
State	v	4/10/86
State Marker		
National	v	10/25/85



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Historic overview:

Lee Burt, a key member of manufacturing companies in Detroit had this Italianate house built in the early 1870's at the corner of Conner and East Jefferson. Brick was added, to this original wood framed building, between 1885 and 1888 when the eastern addition was added.

The Burt family was part of the Burt Manufacturing Company, the manufacturers of car wheels and mineral paint. The family was also involved in the Peninsular Iron Works Company. In 1872, Burt Manufacturing Company began producing patterned architectural ironwork, iron fronts and castings. In 1880, Lee Burt was named manager to one of the successor companies, Detroit Iron Furnace Company. The Detroit Furnace Company was sold to the U. S. Rubber Company in 1920, the predecessor of Uniroyal.

The house was adapted with each change the companies endured. After the house was acquired by the U.S. Rubber Company it was used as a boarding house for newly arrived workers and as a place where union members met. During the Depression it was used as a support agency to help unemployed workers. After the Depression, production of tires increased to 60,000 tires a day until the early 1970's. By the 1980's only 500 employees remained compared to the 150,000 workers between 1939-1942. The introduction of radial tires and the decreased production in the auto industry led to the fewer workers and once again the house became a place for workers to receive information about pensions, relocation and job training opportunities. The International Rubber Workers Union faced disbandment and the future of the building was uncertain until it was purchased by the Ladies Auxiliary of Chapter 101 in 1984.

